



# Production of norms and securitization in development policies: from "Human Security" to "Security Sector Reform"

Pénélope Larzillière

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United Nations in the Arab World  
with

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# **Production of Norms and Securitization in Development Policies:**

**From Human Security to Security  
Sector Reform**

**Pénélope Larzillière**

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# Production of Norms and Securitization in Development Policies:

## From Human Security to Security Sector Reform

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# Abstract

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Security has become part and parcel of the objectives of development policies where a particular emphasis is placed on the interlinkages between security and development. The history of approaches to security in the development field sheds light on how this has come about, i.e. on how the notion of 'human security' has evolved into 'security sector reform' (SSR). While development stakeholders first devised the human-security approach as a means of mainstreaming their objectives into the security sector, it also had the effect of opening their own field up to the semantics of security; and today, the objectives of the narrower approach of SSR, together with the new norms it has brought into play, appear torn between support for Western security policies and, on the other hand, the strengthening of democratic control over the sector and its capacity to ensure a secure national environment in the non-Western States where they are introduced. This is confirmed in a study of SSR in the Lebanon, which exposes the conflicting norms inherent to a policy of reinforcing 'weak states' through outside intervention in national policy-making.

# Introduction

Development policies have been increasingly linked to security concerns since the end of the Cold War. Security has become part of the conventional objectives assigned to development while development plans are systematically added to international and NATO military interventions, peace-keeping and post-conflict programs. As a result of the well-known 'soft power' doctrine<sup>1</sup>, development is deemed a powerful strategic tool<sup>2</sup> and humanitarian aid a way for military operations to gain acceptance and legitimacy. Armies have become humanitarian actors not only providing security for convoys but directly distributing aid, as a way of improving their image. The necessity of a security and development nexus which integrates security and development actors in a single policy system is promulgated as improving efficiency for both sectors. After 2001, the 'global war on terror' intensified the link between security and development, no longer restricting it to conflict or post-conflict situations (Howell and Lind 2010). In the first instance, funding goes to zones whose stabilization is considered strategic, without any close link to their economic situation (Harrigan 2011).

This evolution has fostered some opposition. Actors in the development and humanitarian sectors have denounced the renunciation of neutrality and the way in which their image has thus been blurred as a result of the lack of differentiation from army and security actors. Western NGOs are concerned by a growing rejection of their action in the field and the way in which they have become increasingly targeted, considered as one agent among others with an imperialist agenda (Abu Sada 2011; Larzillière and Micheletti 2010; Stoddard, Harmer and DiDomenico 2009). Actors in the development sector have also denounced the implementation of short-term policies from one country to another in function of the evolution of security priorities and emergencies (Hills 2010) with no regard for the goals of sustainable development. Moreover, the link with security concerns has had an impact on the content of development policies which have become more cultural, concerned with changing 'hearts and minds' developing 'a culture of peace', 'empowerment' or 'support for the free market'. This type of program increases the level of intrusion of international policies in society and as such can be considered a radicalization of aid (Duffield 2002).

This article aims at giving insight into this evolution by analyzing the way the term 'security' has been introduced and defined in development policies. To do so, it focuses on two political labels: first 'human security' then 'security sector reform' as the two main conceptions of security defined in succession in development policies. In different ways, these two labels define security as one of the main goals of development policies. What are the norms at work here and what are the consequences for the understanding of development and its objectives? What view of the societies targeted by these policies is propagated? Securitization is analyzed here through the lens of the production of norms in policy transfers. In this sense, the analysis is in line with the critical security studies which subject political labels to reconsideration and do not directly use them as concepts and analytical tools (Vale 2005). 'Human security' and 'security sector reform' have been conceived of as political labels. This is why rather than confining ourselves to assessing the success or failure of their implementation and producing an analysis of their instrumental rationality, the aim here is to "unpack" these headings, describe their political history and analyze the norms inherent to them.

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1 Developed by Joseph Nye (2004). The latest evolution being the notion of 'smart power' (Nye 2008), which advocates the synthesis of 'hard' and 'soft power' for leadership.

2 "It is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development goals, and our democratic ideals in today's world". Realizing the goals of Transformational Diplomacy.' Secretary Condoleezza Rice. Testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. February 15, 2006. Quoted in Jude Howell and Jeremy Lind, 2008, p 15.

Human security was an attempt to give development objectives the priority and importance inherent to security semantics, through the broadening of the classical definition of security and a switch from state security to people-centered security. I argue however that the opposite has happened. Security semantics relate back to ideas of threat and fear, and leads away from “normal politics” (Buzan 2004, p 370). In the context of development policies strongly oriented by the North-South power relationship and Western geopolitical interests, it has contributed to the securitization of development policies. The term ‘security’ thus introduced into development policies has been kept but its meaning modified. The broad human security definition has been abandoned for the classical security definition focusing on the state. The introduction of the new terminology - ‘security sector reform’ - illustrates this shift towards the state, which is the main difference between ‘human security’ and ‘security sector reform’ (SSR).

This evolution has been closely linked to the evaluation of states as ‘failed’ or ‘fragile’ and, as such, considered an important threat for Western countries. Because of this, the promotion of SSR in development policies results in a dual ambivalence. The first issue to clarify is the question of precisely whose security is concerned – is it the security of potentially threatened states in the West, host states or local populations? The second issue is the status of the host states and of their sovereignty. These policies aim at strengthening states to enable the implementation of these policies but, at the same time, include in international policies dimensions that were previously reserved to State sovereignty.

The SSR analysis is extended by a case study of Lebanon, which sheds light on the sovereignty question in these policy transfers. There is a tension in SSR political objectives:- should they focus on strengthening the security sector in support of Western security policies or, increasing democratic control over the security sector and improving its effectiveness in ensuring a safe national environment. SSR appears here as mainly a top-down agenda, strongly committed to Western security concerns and may also show some discrepancy with national security concerns. Furthermore it demonstrates the classical conception of security dominant in SSR, namely the trend of concentrating on security actors and difficulties on the ground in integrating broader development objectives as well as involving civil society.



# 1. Human security: an Ambivalent Notion, from Development to Securitization

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## 1.1 From State Security to People-centered Security: the Political Genealogy of Human Security

The integration of the notion of security into development policies at first ran parallel to a re-conceptualization of security, from a traditional state-centered definition towards a people-centered definition. In the field of security studies, the first step in this direction was taken by the Copenhagen school which developed the notion of societal security (Buzan 2007 [1991]). In the context of the end of the Cold War and the multiplication of internal wars, it argued that the reference for security should not be the State but social groups, their safety and freedom, and concentrated in particular on threats to their religious or ethnic identity. This was a real move away from the conventional definition of security in strategic studies (Vale 2005, p 65), but was also challenged as, in practice, leading to a reduction in individual freedom (Moller 2000). The focus of the debate on the notion of individual freedom further shows the shift in paradigm in security studies away from state security.

The human security approach was developed in this context and can be considered as a political synthesis (rather than an academic one) of the new approach to security and the growing awareness of non-military threats<sup>3</sup>. The notion was introduced for the first time by Mahbub ul Haq in the UNDP *Human Development Report* in 1994, in preparation for the social development summit of 1995 *Securitization of development issues*. It goes one step further in this post-Westphalian direction<sup>4</sup>, taking as reference the individual person and as such “is closely linked to a cosmopolitan understanding of international politics, i.e. the conviction that human beings, not states, have an intrinsic value and should be protected” (Daase 2010, p 28). In this view, the interstate threat is no longer the main one, and security should include the threat of the State against its own population<sup>5</sup>. In the UNDP definition, it includes hunger, disease and crime as well as economic, environmental, community and political threats. In that sense, it has not only been a broadening of security objectives, but also of development ones, which in this view cannot be measured by economic growth alone (Steward 2004).

Politically, the promotion of a new security agenda was linked to the post Cold War context. Since the main military threat had disappeared, the idea was to try and channel funds towards development, particularly those previously dedicated to military spending (Ewan 2007). Human security was thus a strategy intended to label development issues as security issues (Zwierlein and Graf 2010, p 8), to give development new funding and urgency. This human security agenda was adopted as a UN mandate by Kofi Annan in the 1999 *Millennium Declaration*. The term received support from medium power countries, mainly Canada, Japan and Norway, who have used it as a foreign policy tool, to support their role on the international scene based on their commitment to peacekeeping and development aid (Farer 2011). They took the lead in the newly created human security network<sup>6</sup> and supported the creation of a UN commission dedicated to it, co-chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen, who aimed at elaborating an operational content<sup>7</sup>. Japan financed the creation of a UN trust fund for human security. In 2003, the commission brought out its first report *Human Security Now*. The concept was also endowed by the European Commission and in 2004 the Barcelona Report made human security part of the European defense strategy.

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3 Notably through the work of previous commissions “such as the Brandt Commission, the Bruntland Commission, and, later, the Commission on Global Governance” (Acharya 2001, p 444). In the same period, the turn towards “global governance” also lessened the strategic importance of borderland states and interstate cooperation.

4 “Obsolete Westphalian systems” are explicitly mentioned in the report of the *Commission on Human Security* (2003, p 2; quoted in Zwierlein and Graf 2010, p 8).

5 As underlined in the UNDP report (1994), in the report of the *Commission on Human Security* (2003) and in the report of the Human Security Center (2005), led by Andrew Mack and Zoe Nielsen. See St Marie, Standon and Naghshpour (2008) and Ewan (2007).

6 «which brought issues such as human rights, conflict prevention, HIV/AIDs and child soldiers” (Tadjbaksh 2007 p 13).

7 See Sen (1999).

## 1.2 The Gradual Reduction of the Initial Holistic Approach

The inclusion of security as a term in development policies was based on a considerable broadening of its definition as well as a shift in focus from the state to the individual. However, the political debate quickly resulted in a reduction of the initial holistic approach. Indeed, the multiplication of international initiatives did not mean that a broad consensus had been agreed about the political usefulness of human security and its definition. The imprecision and the breadth of the definition had probably also allowed a disparate coalition with diverse objectives to hold together (Paris 2001). However, the adoption process rapidly fostered a large debate, even inside the coalition which supported it, targeting the extent of the UN definition as being too broad. The terms of the debate revolved around the distinction between “freedom from want / freedom from fear”, or to summarize Amitav Acharya: should human security only concern physical violence or, through the notion of ‘freedom from want’, adopt a holistic approach which includes structural violence and issues such as poverty or disease? (Acharya 2001, p 447) The main counter arguments targeted a holistic approach, which was too broad to be operational and could not enable the production of analytic variables (Ewan 2007; MacFarlane and Khong 2006; Paris 2001). As a consequence, the redefinition of human security has increasingly been directed towards a pure ‘freedom from fear’ notion. For example, this is the Canadian approach (DFAIT 2002) and the position of the *Human Security Center* in 2005. The shift of the human security notion towards the protection from organized violence alone reduces the possibility of the inclusion of development objectives.

## 1.3 Securitization of Development Policies

The process of the reduction in the meaning of human security has meant that the initial aim – which was to include development objectives under the heading of security – has not been achieved. This can be analyzed at two distinct levels which have however converged in their effects towards the securitization of development policies. In the first instance, factors inherent to security semantics have impacted development policies and secondly, the geopolitical context of implementation has been linked to Western geopolitical interests.

### **Security Semantics and the Production of Norms in Development Policies**

The specificity of security semantics which relates to the notions of threat, fear and urgency has already been mentioned. It tends to militarize the vision of development and to emphasize a friend/enemy dichotomy (Ewan 2007, p 183). In that sense, it tends to move means and ends away from everyday politics and legitimize politics of exception. As Waever stresses, it is a “speech act” and a powerful tool prioritizing attention (Waever quoted in Buzan 2007[1991], p 288). This has been consciously used by actors in the development sector and those who originated the concept of human security to prioritize development objectives under this new heading. However, and especially in the political context of the ‘new wars’, far from the expectations of peace of the early post-Cold War period, the redefinition process has failed and it is rather the opposite that has happened, i.e security policies have been classed as development policies and have been subordinated to security goals.

A good example of the way reference to security produces new norms is the conception of the struggle against poverty. This major objective of development policies changed after being integrated into the security semantic. In the holistic conception of ‘human security’, protection from poverty is part of the security notion and an end in itself. Subsequent to the securitization process, development policies have been conceived as useful for security policies because ‘unequal development’ is an important source of conflict (Stewart 2004, p 1) and poverty or relative deprivation<sup>8</sup> generates violence. There is a tendency to make a causal link between poverty and violence in many official development documents<sup>9</sup>.

8 The whole theoretical trend which explains revolts by deprivation or relative deprivation is a good example of this. See Davies, J.C., *When Men Revolt and Why*, New York, The Free Press, 1971, p 134-147 and Gurr, T., *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1970.

9 Examples include the very title of a Department for International Development document (UK DFID 2005): *Fighting Poverty to Build a Safer World; a Strategy for Security and Development* (quoted in Howell and Lind 2010).

Making a direct causal link between poverty and violence also ignores the numerous situations where extremely difficult living conditions engender apathy rather than combativeness<sup>10</sup>. At this level, there is an interesting discrepancy in the World Bank views between the political position argued in reports where unemployment becomes a direct factor of violence (World Bank 2011) and the arguments made in a Policy Research Working Paper, where the link becomes much more indirect. Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler and Mans Söderbom thus argue that prior inequality favors neither the initiation nor the duration of conflicts. According to them, if low income has an influence on the initiation but not the duration of a conflict, it is an indirect one, based on the fact that it «reduces the cost of recruitment for [armed] organization» (2001, p 18).

Indeed, even if direct links between poverty and violence are difficult to prove and have theoretical weaknesses<sup>11</sup>, politically, they have been seen as a way to give renewed importance to development as shown by political statements such as *“for both developing countries and to prevent global terrorism it is essential to promote inclusive development”* (Stewart 2004, p 1). However, so defined, the link between security and development becomes a utilitarian one in which development is a way to ensure security. Development is no longer an end in itself, but a means. The securitization process deepens here since it is no longer the scope of the definition of security that is at stake. The return to a more classical definition of security has already been made. The question now concerns the link or the subordination of development ends to security ends since they are supposed to deal with related phenomena. As shown above, this also has an impact on the framework used to analyze the societies concerned by development policies and on the way they are perceived.

## ***Security, Development and Western Hegemony***

This evolution involves elements of security semantics but it has also to be understood in the wider context of the North-South power relationship. The fact that development policies are part of it is not new, but the influence of this power relationship on the integration of the notion of security into development policies has meant the emergence of new norms, interventions and a set of policy prescriptions, and has contributed to securitization. In the first place, this political context has influenced the way the ‘human security’ notion has been perceived by non-Western countries, specifically at state level. Indeed, even if Mahbub ul Haq first conceived the notion of human security as one of general justice, once integrated into Western and multilateral development policies, it has been seen as a justification for the imposition of new norms specifically in these countries. The insertion of human security in the North-South power relationship has thus led to the criticism that it is part of Western hegemony at two levels. At the level of the production of norms, the universalization and globalization of Western norms and values is questioned. At the implementation level, there are concerns about the breaches of sovereignty in the name of those values.

If we take the production of norms, human security has indeed been integrated into global politics based on quantified variables and a standardized set of policy prescriptions whose apparent objectivity and expertise lead to the fading out of the political values and objectives which underpin them, even if the human security agenda is clearly related to liberal values (UNDP 1994, p 23). The insertion of the human security label in the North-South power relation has also meant that in the name of security, there is a focus on the violence of ‘the others’, including political violence. It has become a deviation that cultural development and other ‘peace culture’ programs could correct (Grayson 2008, p 395; Lefranc 2008) and a form of depoliticization thus occurs.

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<sup>10</sup> As Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos observes, the poorest countries are not the most combative (2005, p 137).

<sup>11</sup> See the criticism in Dobry 1992, p 52-56.

If we turn to the implementation, as discussed above, the main shift concerns the marginalization of the role of the state in the countries concerned by these policy transfers, which also allows further interventions and questions national sovereignty. In this context, it is mainly non-Western states, especially Asian ones, who have abundantly criticized human security as a tool to allow further interference and interventions, to impose Western values, political institutions and capitalist markets (Acharya 2001; Tadjbakhsh 2007). As Cornel Zwierlein and Rüdiger Graf stress, in a way 'human security' has appeared as "the positive complement to the negatively connoted idea that a hegemonic power or the UN should become a "world police" (Zwierlein and Graf 2010, p 9). At that level, it has been seen as a prescriptive tool to impose liberal peace. The use of the human security label in this political context has however not prevented the challenging of national and regional appropriations<sup>12</sup>, especially by non-state actors. Further intrusion into sovereignty could now be done in the name of ensuring human security for the population and protecting it from its own state; however, this possibility actually goes beyond any real political willingness to intervene<sup>13</sup>, especially because it has not been clearly specified who should take responsibility (Daase 2010).

The question of the breaches of national sovereignty incurred and of Western interventionism is thus somewhat ambivalent. Once again this concerns the scope of the definition of human security and the political opposition to a broad definition that could imply wide international obligations. On the contrary, the reduction to a more classical approach to security restores to Western interventionism all its geopolitical interests. In this respect, the notion of human security has thus been first reduced then marginalized in Western development policies and international organizations (Paris 2001, King and Murray 2001-2002, Swiss 2011). The UN is the only one to maintain reference to it but still debates the definition<sup>14</sup>. However, the integration of the term 'security' in development policies has been maintained, with the introduction of a new term; security sector reform, which has now become the main reference to security in development policies (Paris 2001, Swiss 2011).

12 See, for example, the UNDP Arab Development report in 2009.

13 For example, the opposition of the American right wing, who saw in it a potential increase in State role and duties (Farer 2011).

14 In 2005, the paragraph 143 of the Final Document of the UN Summit mentioned "we commit ourselves to discuss and define the notion of human security in the General Assembly." In 2010, Résolution 65/1. *Tenir les promesses : unis pour atteindre les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement* of the General Assembly noted § 25. « We take note of the first formal debate organized by the President of the General Assembly in which different views on the notion of human security were presented by Member States, as well as the ongoing efforts to define the notion of human security, and recognize the need to continue the discussion and to achieve an agreement on the definition of human security in the General Assembly. »

## 2. Towards a Narrower Definition of Security in Development Policies: Security Sector Reform

Indeed, while the notion of human security has been marginalized, the idea of a 'security-development nexus' has succeeded, based on the assertion that there can be no development without security (as well as no security without development). The link is explicitly asserted by the main Western organizations (European Union (EU), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)<sup>15</sup>, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the UK's Department for International Development (DFID)) as well as the United Nations<sup>16</sup> and the World Bank<sup>17</sup> (Sayigh 2007, p 6). In this conception, the notion of security is reduced further, while becoming a priority also for development policies. This evolution is visible in the wording of the term 'security sector reform'.

### 2.1 Conception and Introduction of SSR

The first development actor to officially highlight SSR as a priority was the UK DFID in 1998 (even if the term did circulate previously) (Brzoska 2003, Swiss 2011). The OECD took it up as a leading concept from 2001 onwards, and has given it central importance in Western bodies, with the continuous elaboration of its guidelines (OECD 2001, 2004) and a handbook (OECD 2007, in addition to new chapters in 2009 and 2010<sup>18</sup>, and OECD 2011). In the official definitions, "SSR programming aims to support countries in the development of more effective, efficient, and accountable justice system ... in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance and the rule of law" (OECD 2011, p 15). For USAID, "SSR is an umbrella term that might include integrated activities in support of: defense and armed forces reform; civilian management and oversight; justice; police; corrections; intelligence reform; national security planning and strategy support; border management; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); and/or reduction of armed violence" (USAID 2009, p 7). To summarize, SSR has three main spheres of action: democratic control, professionalization and capacity building, and international and regional security cooperation (Bellamy 2003, quoted in Sayigh 2007, p 4).

The definition of security is obviously more restricted here and tends to concentrate on actors in the security sector. However, there is officially a link with human security as SSR is supposed to remain people-centered. The OECD identifies civil society as one of the nine sub-sectors of the security system<sup>19</sup> and advocates that SSR programs should "carefully identify the security needs of the people in a society – including women, men, boys, girls, minorities, vulnerable groups etc. – and what is required to meet those needs." (2011, p 15). So SSR is not supposed to concentrate on the protection of states and military threats (Sayigh 2007). The vision includes broader security issues, and is also concerned with liberal values and allowing "people – including poor people – to expand their options in life". This was one of the official objectives that weakened development donors' objections to the label and its focus on security (Brzoska 2003, p 4). A significant milestone in the linking between SSR and development took place in 2005 when the official development assistance (ODA) was redefined to include SSR (OECD 2005) with the creation of a sector code "conflict, peace and security". Spearheaded by the UK DFID and the OECD, a convergence of Western bilateral and multilateral donors around the integration of security programs could then be observed with the creation of targeted units and dedicated flows of resources. In 2001, the UNDP established the bureau for crisis prevention and recovery, including SSR programs, while NATO, the World Bank (which has a post-conflict unit) and the EU promoted it. In 2004, on behalf of the U.S. government, USAID endorsed the OECD publication "SSR and Governance: Policy and

15 «There is widespread recognition that there can be no security without development, and no development without security» OECD 2011, p 6.

16 In 2010, Résolution 65/1. *Tenir les promesses : unis pour atteindre les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement* of the General Assembly noted § 13 «We recognize that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing».

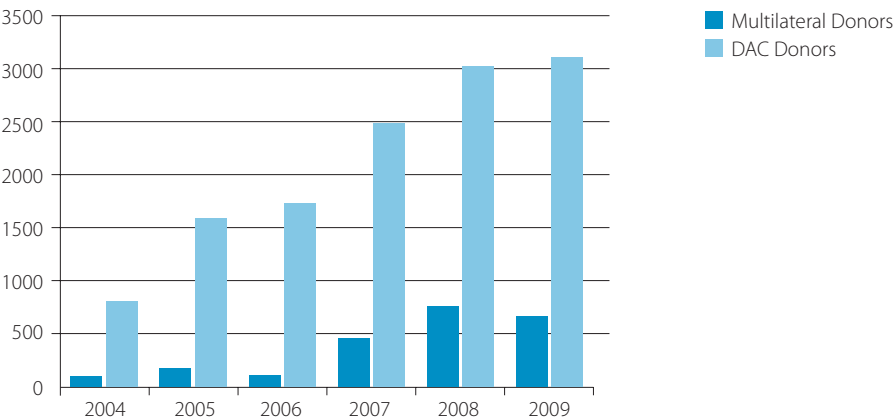
17 «There is a growing international policy consensus that addressing violent conflict and promoting economic development both require deeper understanding of the close relationship among politics, security, and development.» (World Bank 2011, p 185).

18 New chapters on "Integrating Gender Awareness and Equality" and "Monitoring and Evaluation".

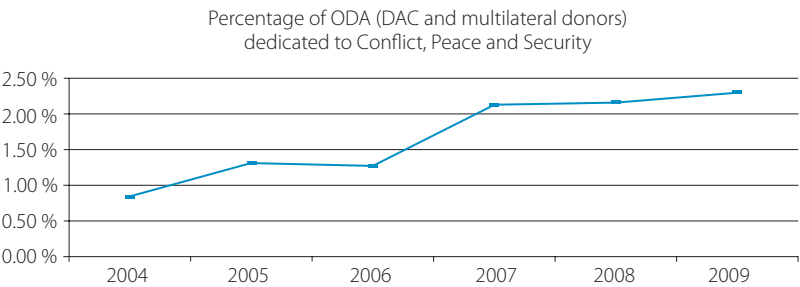
19 «The security system is comprised of nine sub-sectors: accountability and oversight; defense; intelligence and security service; integrated border management; police; justice; private security and military companies; and **civil society**» (OECD 2011, p 15)

Good Practice” and in 2009, with the US Department of Defense, published guidelines about the implementation of SSR (USAID 2009).

This evolution has been visible in the sharp increase in the ODA funds from both multilateral and bilateral donors dedicated to security and development<sup>20</sup> (see figure1). Between 2004 to 2009, the official development assistance dedicated to conflict, peace and security by the countries who are members of the development assistance committee (DAC<sup>21</sup>) almost quadrupled (from 813 million to 3.1 billion), while the multilateral ODA increased six-fold (from 106 to 668 million). In 2010, USAID dedicated 8.3 % of its budget to conflict and security programs (937 million). See USAID 2011, p 26). Not only has the amount of funds dedicated to conflict, peace and security programs increased, but their share of the global ODA has also increased, from 0.83 % in 2004 to 2.3 in 2009 (see figure 2).



**Figure 1: Reported ODA expenditure under ODA code on Conflict, Peace and Security from 2004 to 2009. Figures are expressed in millions of US dollars. Data Source: OECD Query Wizard for International Development Statistics, retrieved December 2011.**



**Figure 2: Percentage of ODA (DAC and multilateral donors) dedicated to Conflict, Peace and Security. Data Source: OECD Query Wizard for International Development Statistics. Retrieved December 2011.**

<sup>20</sup> Pure SSR programmes represented about 20 % of it in 2008. The OECD report in 2009 underlined that “SSR is moving from the periphery to the core of programming.” (OECD 2009, p 6)

<sup>21</sup> The development assistance committee(DAC) of the OECD include 24 members: the European Union and 23 countries historically considered as main donor countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States).

## 2.2 Marginalization of Development Objectives

Security programs have thus become increasingly important in development policies. This evolution is backed up by the conception that development is not only a tool for security as in the soft power doctrine, but is incompatible with conflict.<sup>22</sup> This is why providing a secure environment should be the first priority. Security is thus an integral part of development objectives in the narrower definition as absence of physical threats. The merging of security and development is reinforced by the 'whole of government' approach whose purpose is to ensure close coordination between security, diplomacy and development actors, and to contribute to the creation of a security-development nexus. SSR contributes to this integrated approach and is now considered a core part of the development discourse and programming, which was not the case in the 1990s.

In the original conception, security sector reform focused on the security actors, but included the objective of providing "people-centered" security and democratic control over the security actors. As Arnold Luethold describes it: "Within the development community, security sector reform is seen as a key component of the broader *Human Security* agenda ...and extends, therefore, well beyond the narrower focus of transforming the traditional security organizations and the authorities in charge of civil management and oversight. (...) to include the well-being of the populations and the guaranteeing of their rights." (Luethold 2004, p 94).

Even so, the integration of SSR in official development assistance was not without its debates and tensions. Members of official Western development institutions expressed their reluctance (Howell and Lind 2009, Swiss 2011), because they were concerned that the obvious blurring of security issues with security actors could impede their own activities rather than assist them, regardless of their political agenda. Liam Swiss quotes an anonymous USAID official who pointed to the contradiction within SSR between the interests of the US, and a development perspective that should be interested in enhancing the "host nation's capacity to make decisions about their own security" (Swiss 2011). The defense ministries in Western countries have also considered that associating with development actors could be an impediment to their efficiency (Brzoska 2003).

Moreover, the post 9/11 geopolitical concerns and the global war on terror have led to a concentration on the modernization and professionalization aspects of the SSR program<sup>23</sup>. The main objective has now become the enhancing of the countries' contribution to counter-terrorism. Furthermore, the link with American foreign policy is clearly stated. The USAID, the Department of State and the Department of Defense published joint guidelines stating that "SSR can help ... reinforce US diplomatic, development, and defense priorities, and reduce long-term threats to US security by helping to build stable, prosperous, and peaceful societies beyond our borders." (USAID 2009, p 4). Securitization sharpens the impact on the programs of any discrepancy between Western national interests and the host countries' national interests. The implementation processes have shown evident tensions between these various objectives. In addition, the concept of SSR is itself ambivalent aiming as it does at strengthening the State, while basing its implementation process upon breaches of national sovereignty.

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22 An assertion that is challenged by the studies of Christopher Cramer (2007), and more generally by the theoretical trend based on the seminal work of Georg Simmel who insisted on the integrative aspect of conflict (Simmel 1908).

23 Western interests in the arms trade have also contributed to this focus (Smith 2011, p 15).



## ***A Return to State Security?***

Indeed, along with the global war on terror has come the strategic consideration that fragile states were the main source and location of terrorism. Therefore, strengthening the capacities of those states, especially in the security sector, has become a priority for Western policies. For example, the OECD unit in charge of SSR, or “conflict, peace and development cooperation” was renamed as being for “conflict and fragility” (INCAF) in 2009. This has meant a return to the traditional conception of security, which is based on state level, and, more generally, renewed importance has been given to state institutions as partners in cooperation<sup>24</sup>.

The main evolution in the shift from ‘human security’ to ‘security sector reform’ in the conception of security in development policies has been the role given to states. Human security included the idea that the security of people was more important than that of the state, that it could be necessary to protect the population from its own state and that civil society was the appropriate interlocutor for policy transfers. Under the ‘security sector reform’ heading, the main change has been the question of who should be the partner to implement security-development policies with a return to the state. As shown above, this is linked to the general Western political context where the danger of fragile or failed states is emphasized. This return to the role of the state has been effected while maintaining the possibilities of breaches of sovereignty in the name of security, especially in the case of defense and security policies, so that the role given to the host states is far from the Westphalian conception of sovereignty. The actual definition of security in the SSR policy at the outset was broad and people-centered. In implementation however the objectives were reduced and securitized, in a process that was not unlike what occurred with the idea of human security.

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24 In the most recent evolution of the SSR policy, it is the question of “armed violence reduction” that is emphasized (OECD 2011). On the one hand, this link narrows the security field further and the purpose is again to “help bridge the security-development nexus” (OECD 2011, p 13). On the other hand, it is conceived as a shift from the SSR focus on formal institutions of the State towards a more “grassroots approach” (OECD 2011), in answer to SSR top-down implementation difficulties. It does not address the potentially contradictory objectives of SSR that partly explain implementation difficulties.



### 3. Security, Development and the Security Sector Reform in Lebanon

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The conditions of SSR implementation in Lebanon<sup>25</sup> further illustrate how security concerns have become increasingly important in development policies; and more specifically how SSR policies tend to concentrate on security actors and classical security concerns whatever the official agenda may have been at the beginning. Furthermore the top-down approach, in addition to the security focus itself, has made it difficult to create a bridge with the civil society targeted, while the distance from, or the link with national interests has been decisive for the conditions of implementation. As the Lebanese state is categorized as a “weak state», it is especially interesting to study here the contradictions that may appear between the strengthening of the state and foreign interventions during SSR implementation.

#### 3.1 Introduction of the SSR policy in Lebanon

In Lebanon, security policies have been included in development policies since 2005/2006 (Karam 2006). The UN Security Council resolution n° 1559, issued in 2004, which required the dissolution of all militias, was instrumental in inaugurating this new perspective. In this context, and after the withdrawal of Syria in 2005, the first SSR campaign was launched by the British military cooperation, (“acting by proxy for the US” Picard 2009, p 262) in 2006. SSR Western policies in Lebanon therefore started with the disarmament of militias, by which was primarily meant Hezbollah. In the aftermath of the 2006 war with the strengthened position of Hezbollah, the Lebanese government put a brake on the project.

A Swiss-funded foundation, which has also ties with the OECD, reintroduced the notion of SSR in Lebanon in 2007, insisting on the objectives of democratic control over the security sector. The program addressed the whole of the Middle-East. The foundation wanted to take Lebanon as its basis to propagate it further, after other attempts in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine<sup>26</sup>. It encouraged Lebanon to join the council of the foundation in 2007 (being the first Arab country to do so) to enable requests to be made for technical support from the foundation. Faced with difficulties in creating a demand at national level and in involving civil society, the foundation considerably reduced its original ambition and concentrated on workshops and law mapping about the subject. Since 2007, an Arab research and policy network with a specific program on SSR has also initiated workshops with civil and military experts and politicians, as well as publishing working papers on the subject. This network is composed of Arab research and policy institutes with partners from the US and Europe (the Swiss Foundation being also one of their partners) and receives Arab, Western and international funding. In the network project, SSR is specifically defined as a way to challenge Arab ‘securitocracies’ by promoting the public accountability of security forces, national debates and with a special focus on the privatization of security forces. In Lebanon, contrary to other countries like Morocco, the network has had particular difficulty in promoting debates. This has been attributed to the specific fragmentation in the Lebanese security forces<sup>27</sup>.

In parallel to these initiatives, under the SSR policy, bilateral and multilateral military cooperation agreements have been signed with the Lebanese army, especially the anti-terrorist unit of the Internal Security Forces (Belloncle 2006) and there has been a focus on material support and training for army officers (especially by the US, the UK and France). For the Lebanese army, the SSR has been seen as a way to improve its efficiency and decision-making processes<sup>28</sup>, especially after the dysfunctional communication and friendly fire between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the

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25 This part is also based on a qualitative field study conducted in Nov-December 2010 and November 2011 in Lebanon, with SSR stakeholders, NGO and international organization members concerned with security and development. Quoted interviews have been anonymized.

26 On Palestinian security governance and the link with development, see Al Hussein, de Martino, Bocco, et al., 2006.

27 Interview with one of their directors, May 2012.

28 Interview, former general, SSR stakeholder. Beirut, December 2010.

International Security Forces in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el Bared in 2007<sup>29</sup>. The lack of coordination is often underlined as an important weakness in the Lebanese security sector; Elizabeth Picard describes it as “domestically “bifurcated” and internationally subordinate” (Picard 2012).

Two parallel trends can thus be distinguished in Lebanon concerning the introduction of the SSR policy. On the one hand, there are initiatives which insist upon democratization and control by civil society, and endeavor to initiate national debates. In Lebanon, these initiatives have evoked little response apart from a limited circle of specialists. They have thus been essentially based upon a small network of research centers and experts, and have mainly taken stock of the situation and made recommendations. On the other hand, bilateral military cooperation has been reformulated under the SSR policy and concentrates on the professionalization of army and intelligence departments.

### 3.2 SSR: Antiterrorist Professionalization or Democratic Control?

The implementation process of the SSR policy in Lebanon illustrates the ambivalence between the various SSR objectives. It is not clear whether the aim is the efficiency of the security sector or democratic control. In implementation, the two objectives of efficiency and accountability are not really linked. First, there are differing interpretations of the SSR policy. For example, the OECD and the Arab network mentioned above met but discovered that the objectives they listed under SSR were not the same<sup>30</sup>. Second, even with the same objective, e.g. insistence on military efficiency, classical bilateral cooperation was preferred to joint policies. The absence of political coherence in the field and the fragmentation of the initiatives under the label of SSR are not specific to Lebanon and have been described in other case studies (Chandler 2005; Kasongo and Hendrickson 2011).

However, during implementation, the emphasis on SSR as a means of technical transfer and professionalization has become the major trend. This is in keeping with the general political context which was at the origin of Western pressure for SSR implementation in the Arab world. Indeed, SSR policies in the Arab world have been decisively influenced by the ‘global war on terrorism’ and the political objective of enhancing the capacity of Arab States to cooperate alongside the West (Luethold 2004). In Lebanon, even before the Syrian withdrawal, “The United States and the EU had established tight guidelines regarding the international fight against (Islamist) terrorism, illegal immigration and unlawful trafficking ... Notwithstanding the ambiguous attitude of the Syrian rulers and the Lebanese Sunni leadership, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) along with the Internal Security Forces (ISF) had progressively become agents of a globalized struggle between the Western powers and the Middle Eastern Islamic network” (Picard 2009, p 261). In the Lebanese case however, the same consideration has also set certain limits on military cooperation: *“the international community is reluctant because they consider that the army is close to the Hezbollah and they do not want to improve its efficiency to the advantage of the Hezbollah. So, they impose conditions and they agree about the kind of equipment to be used in repression, as in Nahr el bared, but not more”*<sup>31</sup>.

On the one hand, Western powers aim at strengthening the Lebanese state to enhance its ability to cooperate in the struggle against terrorism; on the other hand they limit this strengthening because they are unsure of the political tendencies at work inside the state. The strengthening of the state is thus paradoxically dependent on the acceptance of an external definition of defense and security policies. Thus the evolution in sovereignty approach mentioned above appears clearly in this case study. The professionalization policies also contribute to the ambivalence. Indeed, based on a discourse on expertise, efficiency, good governance and standardization they tend to depoliticize the approach by not stating the ultimate objectives and values (Larzillièrre 2010) and in that sense deprive the host state of decision making (Tidjani Alou 2011, p 114).

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29 From May to August 2007, the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces fought against Fateh el Islam armed group in Nahr el Bared Palestinian refugee camp (Tripoli).

30 Interview with one of the directors of the network, May 2012.

31 Interview, expert, SSR stakeholder, December 2010.

However, even in the context of important Western pressures, the link with national security actors and interests plays a role in implementation and there is a certain national leeway in the process. Comparing the 2006 war and the fight against Fateh el Islam in the Nahr el Bared camp in 2007, Nisrine Mansour shows how the categorization as terrorists, linked to the 'global war on terror' was nationally re-interpreted and selectively applied, following the Lebanese government's own interests and basis for legitimacy. Concretely, "Hezbollah legitimacy was preserved; in contrast Fateh al Islam was drawn into the 'Global War on Terror', and assigned a profile as archetypal terrorists and evil ... the government recognized Israel as a greater national threat. ...and geared its discourse away from the group [Hezbollah] to focus on the humanitarian crisis... In contrast, the government framed Fateh al Islam as a threat to national security" (Mansour 2009, p 92). Therefore, there is a difference between the Western and the national definitions of the political identification of threat. The perception of Israel<sup>32</sup> is at the core of this divergence. The merging with Western security concerns potentially distinct from domestic security concerns increases the perception of SSR as a foreign agenda (Belloncle 2006).

In comparison with the official SSR agenda, which aims at including non-state actors, such as civil society, the case study and implementation conditions underline a triple process: the difficulty in including non-state actors, the reduction of the security definition to military and state level and its potential alignment with foreign geopolitical interests. These processes undermine national appropriation, especially by national development actors and NGOs<sup>33</sup>. No national debate on the question took place in Lebanon and the term is mostly unknown, even if security concerns do correspond to a demand from the population, for whom a preoccupation with security is on a daily-basis<sup>34</sup>.

### 3.3 Security and Western Development Policies

In the initial SSR conception, the link with development was clearly stated, the complementarities of the objectives advocated and references to development systematically added<sup>35</sup>. In the Lebanese case, while SSR has been promoted within the framework of Western policy transfers, it has been mainly limited to military actors and civil experts. In that sense, it is not really possible to consider it a bridge for a security-development nexus. Fundamental opposition to the idea that security should be deemed the ultimate or desired end can be found amongst development actors. One of them thus argues that *"we should refuse poverty in itself and not because of a link with insecurity"*<sup>36</sup>. Furthermore, the opposition to security is linked to the suspicion that this term with all its connotations, ultimately always relates to Western geopolitical interests. This perception of security in development policies appears for example in some initial NGO reactions to the human security wording itself, despite the fact that it was later integrated by some of them (also as a way to get funded): *"The first time they presented it to us; I thought that is something quite foreign... that the West now promotes. I was with colleagues of the Middle East in Norway, and we immediately thought that human security is something to promote peace with Israel ... And at that time there was no connection with development"*<sup>37</sup>.

However, the link between Western security and development policies in Lebanon does not only have to do with the introduction or not of the security terminology. Lebanon is also an example of what has been more generally underlined above i.e. the allocation of development funds following security concerns and the objective of state stabilization. Western development and humanitarian aid funds towards Lebanon increased massively in the post-2006 war period. In relation to the general objective of strengthening the state, these were mainly channeled through the Lebanese government, in preference to the previous strategy of direct NGO and civil society transfers. Relief

32 According to the survey of the Arab Development Report in Lebanon, "occupation and foreign influence" is one of the main perceived threats to human security, just below economic and personal security. (UNDP 2009, p 26)

33 In 2009, OECD raised concerns about SSR domestic legitimacy (OECD 2009).

34 Interviews with NGO leaders, Beirut, December 2010 and November 2011.

35 For example: «Security Sector Reform aims to create a secure environment that is conducive to development, poverty reduction, good governance and, in particular, the growth of democratic states and institutions based on the rule of law." Global Facilitation Network for SSR, 2007, p 4. (The Global Facilitation Network for SSR is funded by the UK Government's Global Conflict Prevention Pool and run jointly by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), Ministry of Defense and Department for International Development (DFID).

36 Interview, ESCWA member, Beirut, November 2011.

37 Interview. NGO leader. Beirut, December 2010.

programs were used for the “renegotiation of political authority over the population” (Mansour 2009, p 205). USAID made its funding conditional to avoid a link with Hezbollah charity networks, a rule difficult to put into practice, since Hezbollah has been the main actor in South Lebanon and has had the best access to population<sup>38</sup>. In fact, the Hezbollah reconstruction branch (*jihad el bina*) whose strategy had been the direct distribution of cash to rebuild houses<sup>39</sup> succeeded in managing the reconstruction and won the struggle for political power (Mac Ginty 2007, Mansour 2009).

Western relief programs were not only dedicated to reconstruction and humanitarian help in South Lebanon; they also had a security and cultural content. In July 2007, the USAID Lebanon director announced that “a large part of the 770 million USD would be dedicated to support the Lebanese Army and security forces and the second part would be granted to the government to support the treasury<sup>40</sup>”. Cultural development was also one of the objectives, with cultural centers and peace education. This orientation generated much criticism from the Lebanese NGOs who insisted on the discrepancy between these programs and the needs of the population and the denial of its political views, or at best the “naivety” of the donors: “For example, XXX, with USAID they opened a cultural center after the war in a totally Hezbollah place, and they were surprised that nobody came! There is a very strong anti-American feeling. And the Europeans come with their idealistic agenda. For example, their focus is on peace education for children in the South. How can you speak with them about peace when their houses have not even been rebuilt? They think the issue is about education!<sup>41</sup>” The Lebanese case also shows the influence of these concerns on the choice of the program targets and the use of development programs to increase acceptance: “it was important for us, for reasons of legitimacy, to be distinguished from the UNIFIL<sup>42</sup>, but in fact we tended to work in the villages where the UNIFIL was not really accepted<sup>43</sup>.” Indeed, security concerns created by the post-conflict situation also generated new funding sources that development actors could use<sup>44</sup>. Thus other development organizations mentioned that given the sudden interest and influx of relief funds for Southern Lebanon, they could finance more sustainable projects, aimed at job creation for example. More generally, it was also mentioned that North Lebanon has been marginalized in development policies, even if its economic situation was worsening because it was not identified as a conflict zone like the South or a zone of illegal trafficking like the Bekaa. In the post-2006 war Lebanon, security concerns have formatted the channeling, the content as well as the targeting of Western development and aid policies.

38 Interviews NGO leaders, Beirut, December 2010 and November 2011.

39 Between 10 000 to 12 000 dollars per household (Mac Ginty 2007, p 475).

40 *The Monthly*, Interview with USAid Lebanon director Raouf Youssef, June-July 2007.

41 Interview Lebanese NGO leader with programs in the South, Beirut December 2010.

42 In 2006, the second United Nations interim force in Lebanon (UNIFIL II) has been launched.

43 Interview. Ex PNUD field officer in South Lebanon. Beirut, November 2010.

44 Interview. ESCWA member, Beirut, December 2010.

## Conclusion

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The Lebanese case confirms the process of securitization but also illustrates its ambivalence. As foreseen by development actors when they tried to use the security semantic to give more urgency to their objectives, it does indeed channel new funding for development. However, in the process also come new objectives and policies to the fore, and a trend to switch to classical security concerns. The production of security norms and policies concur in the enunciation of political issues in security terms. These terms are not univocal. In the case of SSR, difficulties in implementation have as much to do with the contradictory objectives in the concept itself as with the obstacles in the field. The necessity to strengthen host states can be advocated while the legitimacy of these states and their ability to define their policies are undermined. For the domestic perception of these policies, the question of whose security is concerned is as much at stake as the link with development.

However, more generally, the use of a security semantic tends to produce frames of reference and categories that concentrate on the “threatening” aspect of the societies in question and thus format the analysis of these societies. It is probably as interesting to look at what the framing concentrates on as it is to look at what it does not mention (Seckinelgin 2008). It is part of a global process of normalization, quantification and standardization in Western policies which through the reference to supposed politically neutral expertise<sup>45</sup> tends to depoliticize these societies. In such a view, they are no longer subjects with a political agenda but objects of hegemonic policies, while the reference to power relations is erased in a ‘neutral’ technical semantic. The growing rejection and delegitimization of Western development policies as a whole in the Arab world<sup>46</sup>, increasingly perceived as just another way to implement a Western geopolitical agenda, could thus also be analyzed in a counter-hegemonic perspective, in which the political labeling used in development policies is transformed, adapted or refused.

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45 For a precise case-study of how “hegemonic consensus” can be created inside the Mediterranean development network of the World Bank see Hanafi and Tabar 2005.

46 Myriam Catusse and Géraldine Chatelard «*Tanmia. Le développement: fabriques de l'action publique dans le monde arabe ?*». ANR Research Program. 2008-2011 (to be published). Which does not mean that the idea of development in itself is rejected.

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